

# Process Model Guidebook

## What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is simply informing residents of City activities involving the public in city decision making and project planning. Strong community engagement is included in the key values adopted by the City Council:

### We will be a City of

#### **Engaging the community**

All have a voice and are heard.

### We work by

#### **Connectedness**

People are connected with their community, are connected to all parts of the city and can influence government.

#### **Building public trust**

All have access to services and information.

We work in an open, ethical and transparent manner

To further emphasize the need for strong public participation in City activities, the following principles were adopted by the City Council

## Core Principles of Community Engagement

- 1. Right to be involved** – Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- 2. Contribution will be thoughtfully considered** - Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will be thoughtfully considered.
- 3. Recognize the needs of all** - Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
- 4. Seek out involvement** - Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- 5. Participants design participation** - Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- 6. Adequate information** - Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- 7. Known effect of participation** - Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

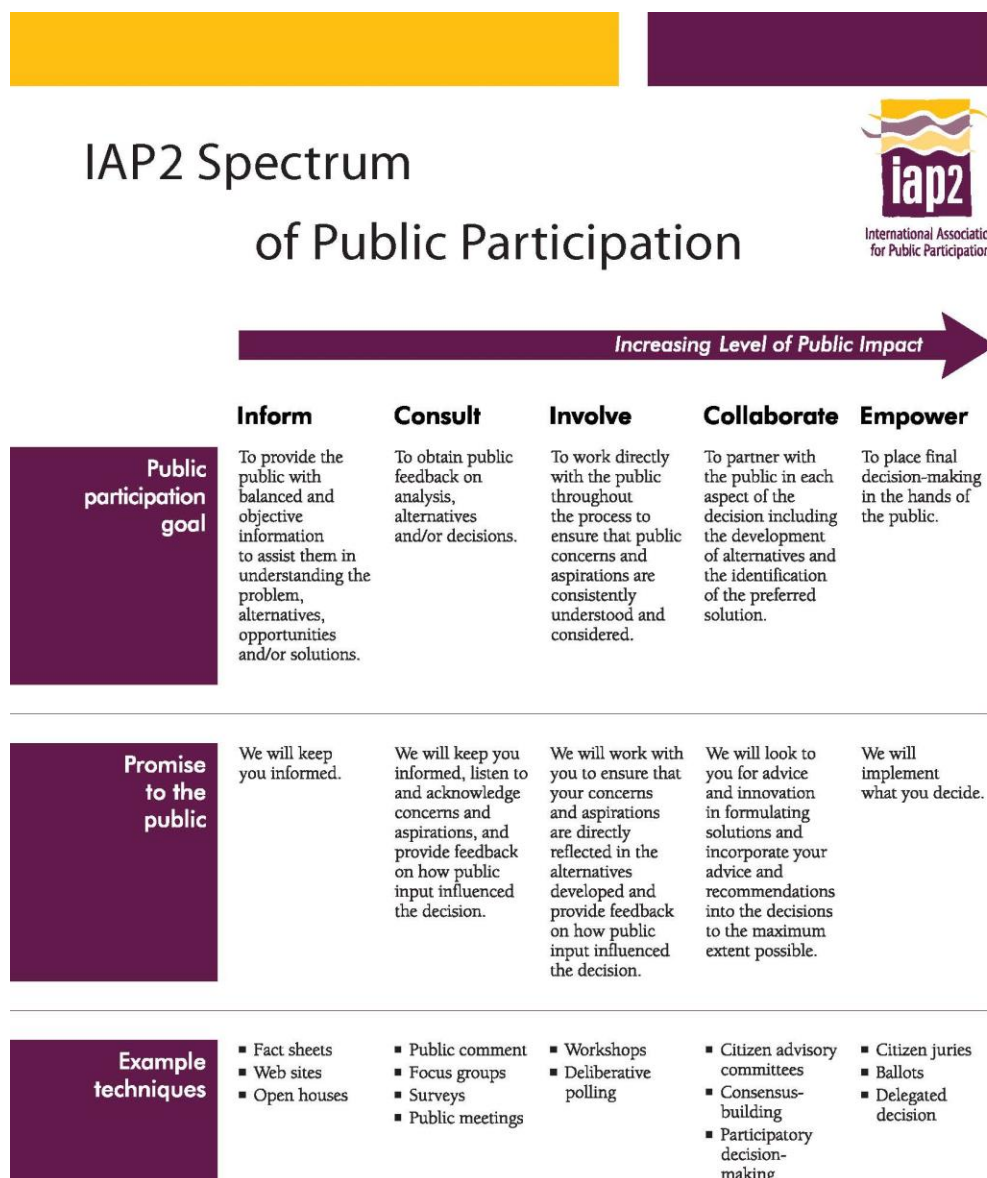
## Benefits of Community Engagement

The benefits to the City from a strong community engagement process include:

- Contributes to better decisions based on a diversity of views and early identification of critical issues;
- Previously unknown needs may be accommodated;
- May reduce costly project delays;
- Increases community acceptance of decisions or projects;
- Builds trust in City government among residents.

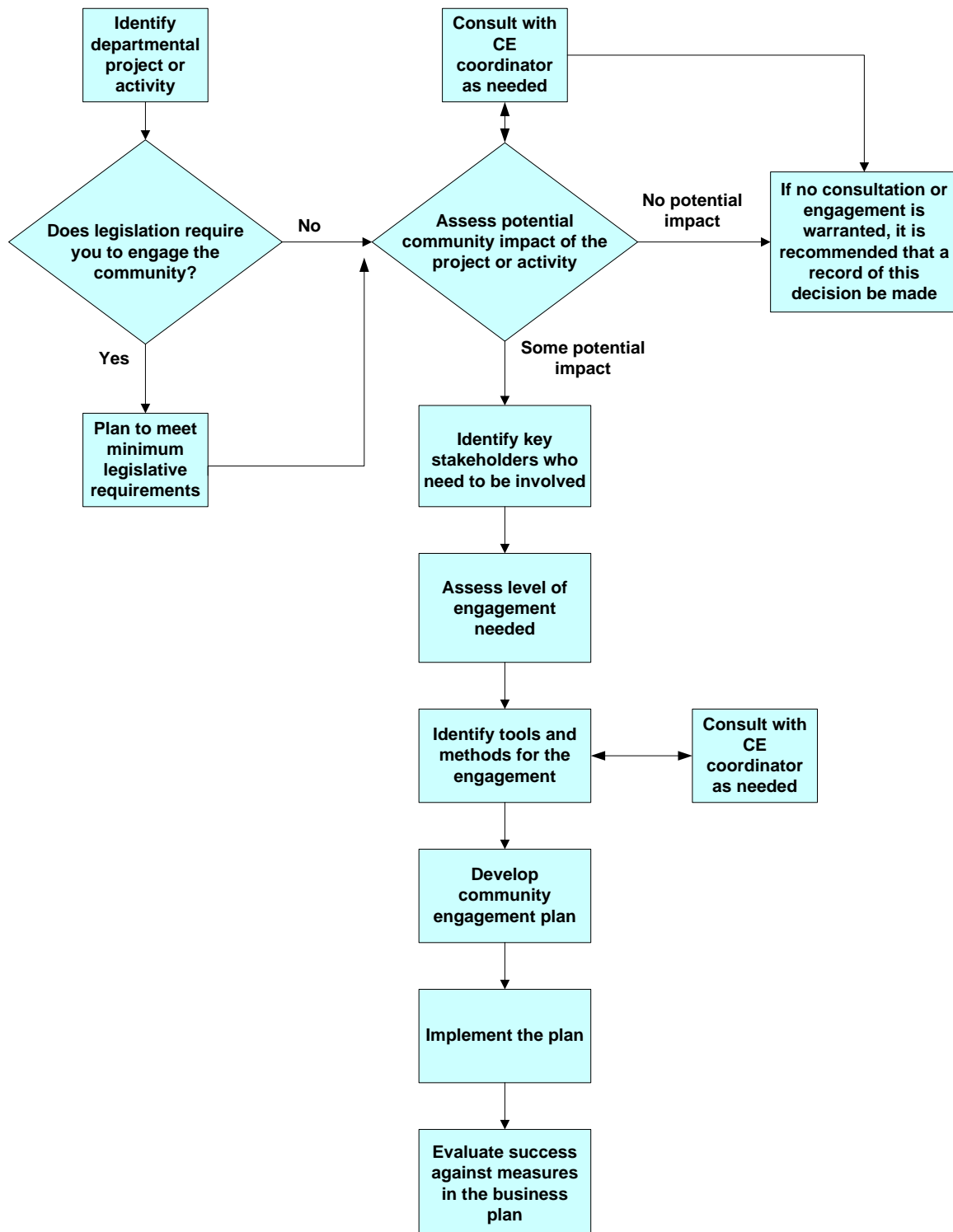
## Level of Public Participation

The appropriate level of engagement will vary by the type of project or the decision to be made. The first step in developing a plan for public participation is to determine what we are asking of the public, which can range from merely providing information or placing the final decision in the hands of the community. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) has developed a useful spectrum of the potential levels of participation.



## The Community Engagement Process Model

In 2006 the City developed a model to provide a step by step process for community engagement on projects. The Process Model (and associated tools) is designed to provide departments with a consistent process to follow when evaluating projects or activities that involve decision making that will affect stakeholders. This does not mean that each department has to pursue the same type of engagement methods. The CE Process Model allows each department the freedom and creativity to customize the decision making and engagement process as needed. It will, however, ensure a standard approach to engagement and community involvement in decision making.



# Appendix 1

## Level of Impact Assessment

The Level of Impact Assessment consists of four (4) impact levels, where impact relates to the “effect of a decision on the community”. It is important to recognize that the Level of Impact does not necessarily dictate the methods of community engagement to be used; however the assessment can guide departments in the direction of similar methods for similar City-initiated decisions. Impact can be anticipated whenever there is an expected behavior change, compliance change or change in a delivered service. The impact levels are as follows:

Level of Impact of Pending Decision	Brief Description	Risk Factors
<b>Level 1</b>  High Impact  Broad Geographic Area	High level of impact on the whole or a large part of Minneapolis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Widespread public interest/desire for information</li><li>• Media exposure likely, potentially controversial</li><li>• Legislative action or interest</li><li>• Potential significant resistance</li></ul>
<b>Level 2</b>  High Impact  Local Geographic Area	High level of impact of a local nature, e.g. a local area, specific community or user group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong local resistance</li><li>• Limited media exposure</li><li>• Limited legislative interest</li></ul>
<b>Level 3</b>  Low Impact  Broad Geographic Area	Lower level of impact on the whole or a large part of Minneapolis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Media attention, probably not controversial</li><li>• Legislative action or interest</li><li>• Potential widespread public interest or desire for information</li></ul>
<b>Level 4</b>  Low Impact  Local Geographic Area	Lower level of impact of a local nature, e.g. a local area, specific community or user group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential for unexpected localized resistance</li><li>• Potential for unexpected limited media exposure</li></ul>

These levels are based on the assumption that any decision to change a project, issue, service or action will have some real or perceived impact on the community. Always assume there is impact.

It may be appropriate to involve Community Engagement staff in making these decisions. The approach to involving other Community Engagement staff should be determined early in the process, as recommended in the Community Engagement Process Model flowchart. There should always be a discussion among department staff since this is not an exact science.

## Criteria for Determining the Impact

The criteria that departments should use to determine the 'level of impact' of a decision to change, remove, or add a project, issue, service or activity is provided in the following criteria table. Examples of activities are provided to assist staff to more accurately make their decision.

Use the following criteria to determine the likely "level of impact" of your decision to change a project, issue, service or activity:

Level of Impact of Pending Decision	Criteria (one or more of the following)	Examples
<b>Level 1</b>  High Impact, Broad Geographic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of real or perceived impact, change or risk across a large part of Minneapolis (Mpls.)</li> <li>• Any significant impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the whole of Mpls., such as the natural environment or heritage</li> <li>• Any impact on health, safety or well being of the Mpls. community</li> <li>• Potential high level of interest across Mpls</li> <li>• Potential high impact on State or regional strategies or directions</li> <li>• Current or ongoing policy discussion regarding an event issue or initiative</li> <li>• Current Council direction on a project or issue</li> <li>• Potential high degree of controversy or conflict for the whole of Minneapolis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing level of Fire Department</li> <li>• Decisions regarding major housing developments or high profile economic developments</li> <li>• Public Safety</li> <li>• City wide "core services"</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Police programs and issues</li> <li>• Local Environment Plan</li> <li>• A change to land categorization, e.g. community to operational land</li> <li>• Disability Action Plan</li> <li>• Development of City wide goals</li> <li>• Removal or key changes of a facility or service catering across Mpls.</li> <li>• Provision of a district or regional facility, e.g. indoor sports center</li> <li>• Changes to or impact on natural land or waterway (where the natural values could be affected)</li> </ul>

Level of Impact of Pending Decision	Criteria (one or more of the following)	Examples
<p><b>Level 2</b></p> <p>High Impact, Local Geographic Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same intensity of impact as Level 1 but on a smaller area or group of people</li> <li>• High level of real or perceived impact, change or risk on a local area, small community or user group/s of a specific facility or service.</li> <li>• The loss of, or significant change to, any facility or service to local community.</li> <li>• Potential high degree of controversy or conflict at a limited local level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood Group concerns and issues</li> <li>• Police Substations</li> <li>• Neighborhood economic development</li> <li>• Change to or loss of valued activity or program, e.g. local youth activity</li> <li>• Local street road closure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 3</b></p> <p>Low Impact, Broad Geographic Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower, although still some real or perceived impact, change or risk across Minneapolis.</li> <li>• Potential for some controversy or conflict.</li> <li>• Potential for some though not significant impact on State or regional strategies or directions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to a Minneapolis wide service, e.g. recycling.</li> <li>• Upgrade of a district or regional facility.</li> <li>• Changes to Customer Service processes, e.g. hours of operation.</li> <li>• Attendance at a community wide event.</li> <li>• Review of community needs, e.g. Survey, recreation needs assessment.</li> </ul>

Level of Impact of Pending Decision	Criteria (one or more of the following)	Examples
<p><b>Level 4</b></p> <p>Low Impact, Local Geographic Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same intensity as Level 3 but on a smaller area or group of people</li> <li>• Lower level of real or perceived impact or change of risk on a local area, small community or user group/s of a specific facility or service.</li> <li>• Only a small change or improvement to a facility or a service at the local level.</li> <li>• Low or no perceived risk of controversy or conflict at the local level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local street upgrade with no major disruption of access to business or homes</li> <li>• Changes to a local activity program, e.g. timing or venue/location</li> </ul>

At any time during a decision to change a project, issue or activity, it may be necessary to reassess the Level of Impact and vary the community engagement approach accordingly, due to a change in the situation or recognition of implications.

## Appendix 2

### Consultation Methods

Methods and Models	Considerations	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>User Comments and Complaints</b>  Encourage feedback from users	Make feedback forms accessible	Provides input from those using the service  Easy to set up  Provides information about service's weaknesses and strengths	Not representative  Essentially reactive to existing systems
<b>Staff Feedback and Suggestions</b>  Encourage feedback and suggestions from frontline staff who deal with the public	Train staff to deal with comments and complaints  Establish systems for obtaining feedback	Shows you value staff and are open to suggestions  Valuable source of information on service use and users	Relies on staff effort  Time consuming  Doesn't necessarily provide representative views
<b>Surveys and Questionnaires</b>  Inquiries sent randomly to sample population to gain specific information for statistical validation	Ensure statistically valid results are needed before making investment  Survey/questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias	Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings  Provides input from cross-section of public, not just activists	Response rate is generally low  For statistically valid results, can be labor intensive and expensive  Level of detail may be



	Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys	Statistically tested results are more persuasive with political bodies and the general public	limited  May be perceived as a public relations tool
<b>Small Neighborhood Meetings</b>  Small meetings within neighborhood, usually at a person's home	Issue relevant to neighborhood  Make sure staff are very polite and appreciative  May need to be aware of other neighborhood issues	Relaxed setting is conducive to effective dialogue  Maximizes two-way communication	Requires a lot of labor to reach many people
<b>Open Public Meetings</b>  Formal meeting with scheduled agenda	Accessible and convenient public location  Publicize event  Clearly defined objective  Provide proper staffing and facilitation	Opportunity to provide information and obtain feedback  Demonstrates commitment to public consultation  Builds relationships with local community  Relatively inexpensive	Not representative  Localized knowledge only  Large group format may be a barrier to some

<b>Representative Groups</b>  Made up of people with particular interest in the issue. Contact may be through forums or discussion groups	Find relevant groups, what they do and who they represent  Determine best contact method	Access to body of research  Consultation with knowledgeable group  Allows in-depth discussion	Opportunity for individuals to capture discussion  Not necessarily statistically representative
---	--	---	---

		Relatively inexpensive	Can be time consuming  Large group format may be a barrier to some
<b>Future Search Conferences</b>  Considering future scenarios and ways to influence outcomes in uncertain situations	Independent and skilled facilitator  No pre-set proposals  Seeks consensus	Allows an exchange of information  Many viewpoints can be heard	Resource intensive  Can be captured by large interest groups  Difficulty in reaching a consensus
<b>Face-to-Face Interviews</b>  One-to-one meetings with stakeholders to gain information on public concerns and perspectives	Where feasible, interviews should be conducted in person, particularly when considering candidates for citizens committees  Take advantage of opportunity for citizens to input on how they participate  Use trained researchers	Provides opportunities to understand public concerns and issues  Provides opportunity to learn how to best communicate with public  Can be used to evaluate potential citizen committee members	Scheduling multiple interviews can be time consuming and expensive  Interviewers must engender trust or risk negative response to format  Not necessarily representative
<b>Focus Groups</b>  8-10 people led by trained facilitator in "one-off" discussion on particular topic	Selection of group is of primary importance  May need to have several groups to investigate views from different perspective	Allows for brainstorming of ideas  Can include those who may usually be excluded (e.g., culturally and linguistically diverse groups)	May be costly  Lack of confidentiality  Qualitative information only

	<p>Value the input and commitment of group members</p> <p>Requires skilled facilitator</p> <p>Rewards/incentives may be offered</p>	<p>Allows in-depth discussions</p>	<p>Difficulty in prioritizing issues</p> <p>Does not lend itself easily to discussing sensitive issues</p>
<p><b>Public Hearings</b></p> <p>Formal meetings with scheduled presentations offered</p>	<p>Try to use informal meetings immediately before to build knowledge base</p>	<p>Provides opportunity for public to speak without rebuttal</p> <p>Meets legal requirements</p> <p>Puts comments on record</p>	<p>Does not foster dialogue</p> <p>Creates “us vs. them” feeling</p> <p>Minority groups not easily included</p>
<p><b>Community Facilitators</b></p> <p>Use qualified individuals in local community organizations to conduct project outreach</p>	<p>Define roles, responsibilities and limitations up front</p>	<p>Promotes community-based involvement</p> <p>Capitalizes on existing networks</p> <p>Enhances project credibility</p>	<p>Can be difficult to control information flow</p> <p>Can build false expectations</p> <p>Information capture can be difficult</p>
<p><b>Advisory Boards and Commissions</b></p> <p>A group of representative stakeholders assembled to provide public input to the planning process</p>	<p>Define roles and responsibilities up front</p> <p>Be forthcoming with information</p> <p>Use a consistently credible process</p> <p>Interview potential</p>	<p>Provides detailed analyses for project issues</p> <p>Participants gain understanding of other perspectives, leading toward compromise</p>	<p>General public may not embrace committee’s recommendations</p> <p>Members may not achieve consensus</p> <p>Sponsors must accept need for “give and take”</p>

	<p>committee members in person before selection</p> <p>Use third party facilitation</p> <p>Ensure members communicate with their constituencies</p>		
<p><b>User Panels</b></p> <p>A small group regularly assembled to debate or provide input on specific issues over a long period of time</p>	<p>Small size – no more than 12</p> <p>Have clear objective and time frame</p>	<p>Useful sounding board</p> <p>Relatively quick feedback</p> <p>Continuing dialogue</p> <p>Can build credibility if all sides are represented</p> <p>May provoke media attention</p>	<p>May provoke unwanted media attention</p> <p>Can polarize issues if not conceived and moderated well</p> <p>Users can become too closely linked to the organization</p>
<p><b>Consensus Conferences</b></p> <p>10-16 panel members come together to research a complex issue and then question expert witnesses before reaching a consensus decision</p>	<p>Requires high level of commitment from panel members</p> <p>Requires compilation of complex material for preparatory days</p> <p>Make available expert witnesses as determined by panel</p> <p>Requires skilled and independent moderator</p>	<p>Panel determine questions to ask witnesses leading to greater impartiality</p> <p>Open to public – transparent</p> <p>Provides informed deliberation</p>	<p>High-level commitment from panel</p> <p>Resource -intensive</p> <p>Costly</p> <p>Extensive preparatory work</p> <p>Not representative</p> <p>May be difficult to reach a consensus</p>

<p><b>Deliberative Opinion Polls</b></p> <p>Measures informed opinion on an issue during a 2-3 day meeting. Uses statistically significant sample</p>	<p>Do not expect or encourage participants to develop a shared view</p> <p>Requires skilled facilitator</p>	<p>Polling of an informed group</p> <p>Exposure to different backgrounds, arguments and views</p>	<p>Resource intensive</p> <p>Can be costly to set-up and pay expenses of those attending</p> <p>Not statistically represented</p>
<p><b>Written Consultation Exercises</b></p> <p>Inviting public submissions for written comments on specific proposals</p>	<p>Provide full details of issue for which views are sought</p> <p>Publicize event</p> <p>May need multiple format for documents</p> <p>Allow ample time to respond</p>	<p>Provides detailed information on the issue of those interested</p> <p>Elicits a considered view</p>	<p>Resource-intensive</p> <p>May have poor response rate</p> <p>Lengthy process</p>
<p><b>Open Days</b></p> <p><b>Community Exhibitions</b></p> <p>Informal events to inform citizens about an organization</p>	<p>Locate suitable venue</p> <p>Publicize the event</p> <p>Provide information displays</p> <p>Timing is important</p>	<p>Gives public flexibility to attend</p> <p>Allows contact with public and can provide ad-hoc feedback</p> <p>Publicize organization</p>	<p>May not be representative</p> <p>Feedback may be limited</p> <p>Difficulty in recording responses</p>
<p><b>Consensus-Building Exercises</b></p>			

<p>Help people reach consensus by focusing on the issues</p>	<p>Requires experienced mediators. Typically used to bring stakeholders together to reach consensus over an issue</p> <p>Round tables are one approach when adversarial groups are brought together</p>	<p>Helps people reach solutions they can all support</p> <p>Allows for different viewpoints to be expressed</p>	<p>High emotional commitment</p>
<p><b>Citizen Advisory Committees</b></p> <p>Intended to represent broader public views</p>	<p>Benefits from balanced committee</p> <p>Can be made up of variety of organizations from government and public</p> <p>Advice of committee should influence decision-making</p>	<p>Informs public, aids trust in government, reduces conflict</p>	<p>Not always a representative group</p>
<p><b>Referenda</b></p> <p>Issue put to popular vote</p>	<p>Initiated by government</p> <p>Issue should stand on its own (not complex question)</p>	<p>Incites discussion</p> <p>All voters have equal influence</p> <p>Results cannot be ignored</p>	<p>Expensive</p> <p>Potential for undue influence by organizations with greater resources</p> <p>Limited use</p>
<p><b>Information Technologies</b></p> <p>Using information technology as a means to inform and gather feedback (e.g., calls for submissions, completing online questionnaires, etc.)</p>	<p>Access to computers may be limited</p>	<p>Cost-effective after initial outlay</p> <p>Quick response rate</p> <p>Easy to keep information current</p>	<p>Won't reach everyone</p> <p>Technical problems</p> <p>Requires expert staff</p>

		Can incorporate large amount of data	Results can be unrepresentative
--	--	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------

## Appendix 3:

### Checklist for Community Engagement

Do we have:

- ☐ Organizational commitment to engagement and to the outcomes derived?
- ☐ Mechanisms and resources to document the full extent of the engagement?
- ☐ Adequate time for engagement built into project timelines?
- ☐ A shared understanding, from all parties involved, of the scope and objectives of the engagement?
- ☐ An understanding from all stakeholders of what is negotiable and open to change and what is not.
- ☐ Agreement from all parties concerned as to whether the focus is on gaining agreement on the process for engagement or on the outcome of the engagement process?
- ☐ The ability to coordinate information and actions across the organizations involved.
- ☐ Relevant information that is readily accessible to all members of the community – including information on the issue and on the engagement process?
- ☐ The financial and technical resources to undertake the engagement?
- ☐ Practical/logistical matters identified and resourced?
- ☐ Appropriately skilled human resources to undertake the engagement?
- ☐ Open and accountable processes that can withstand public scrutiny?



- ☐ Community understanding of the level of input expected of them?
- ☐ Opportunities for engaging the community in debate on the issue?
- ☐ All potential stakeholders identified?
- ☐ Adequate publicity in place to ensure all potential stakeholders are aware of the engagement?
- ☐ An understanding of possible barriers to public participation and appropriate strategies in place?
- ☐ Mechanisms in place for monitoring the engagement process and the organizational flexibility to make changes if required?
- ☐ Strategies in place for evaluating feedback from the engagement?
- ☐ Strategies in place for providing feedback to participants?
- ☐ A clear understanding with stakeholders regarding their level of involvement in implementation of outcomes?
- ☐ An evaluation of the consultation process built into project timelines?

